

12

GOD'S CONTROVERSY

WITH THE

N A T I O N S.

Addressed to the

R U L E R S and P E O P L E

OF

C H R I S T E N D O M.

My people have committed two great evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.
JER. ii. 13.

By THOMAS HARTLEY, M.A. *R.*
Rector of Winwick in Northamptonshire.

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MDCCLVI.

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GOD'S CONTROVERSY

WITH THE

IN A T I O N S

Addressed to the

RULERS and PEOPLE

OF

CHRISTENDOM

It is to be regretted that the great evils which have
fallen on the Church of England, and which have
and which have fallen on the Church of England,
James 18.

THOMAS HARTLEY, M.A.
Rector of Winwick, Northamptonshire.

LONDON:

Printed by R. Mansel, in the Old Bailey, London.
J. Mansel, and J. Mansel, and J. Mansel, and J. Mansel,
Mansel.

(This is the end)

HEAR O heavens, and give ear O
 earth! for the Lord hath spoken:
I have nourished and brought up chil-
dren, and they have rebelled against me.*

Is this complaint true of the children under the first covenant, and not also of the children under the second covenant? Yea of thee O Christendom at this day are these words to be understood with more emphatical application; for towards thee the Lord hath exercised loving kindness in a far greater measure than towards his former *Israel*; towards thee his visitations of mercy and love have been more abundant, his manifestations clearer, his ministrations more glorious. He had compassion on thee when thou sattest in darkness and in the shadow of death, and called thee to be his people who wast not his people, and thee beloved who wast not beloved: nay, he who aforetime cast out the heathen to make room for *Israel* his chosen

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* *Isaiah* i. 2.

after the flesh, rejected that rebellious Israel, and adopted thee to be his spiritual Israel, leading thee out from thy spiritual Ægypt into a spiritual Canaan, where the inheritance, the kingdom, the worship, the glory were to be all spiritual; not instructing thee by beggarly elements of this world, and figures of the truth, but with heavenly wisdom; not giving thee shadows, but the substance of good things.—Thus did he nourish and bring thee up, and thy children within thee. And well didst thou answer the care and loving kindness of the Lord in the day of thy espousals, when thou didst take thy Maker and thy Redeemer for thy husband: thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty, for it was perfect thro' the comeliness which thy bridegroom had put upon thee*; and thou wast a plant of renown, of the Lord's own planting, taking root downwards and bringing forth much precious fruit upwards. How fervent was thy zeal, how strong thy love, how invincible thy faith, how unwearied thy patience! In vain did the lying spirit endeavour to seduce thee, for the spirit of discernment from the Lord was upon thee; thine eye being single thy whole body was full

* Ezekiel xvi.

full of light, and therefore thou triedst them which said they were apostles but were not, and didst find them liars: nor could all the powers on earth shake thy constancy, for thro' grace it was proof against all the malice and persecutions of the enemy; thou wast faithful unto death, and didst seal the testimony of Jesus, which thou hadst received, with thy blood.

But alas, how soon didst thou forsake thy first love and thy first works! the enemy which in vain assaulted thy virtue with all the charms of heathen eloquence, in vain attempted to move thee from thy steadfastness by the sharpest sufferings, and all the terrors of death, now assumes another shape, and endeavours to deceive with more specious and more successful wiles—He transforms himself into an angel of light, and comes cloathed with the form of godliness, and that form decorated with worldly wealth and grandeur, bearing this motto—*Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour: her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace:* which being understood in a carnal sense deceived many; *for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.*

Now began the fatal apostacy from the spirit and life of Christianity. Whilst professors were left in full possession of the form, they were the more easily tempted to quit the power of religion, and so gradually fell from the mystery of Godliness into the mystery of iniquity. The inward eye being now turned outward, the heart was captivated with worldly objects, and the understanding obey'd its motions; for the head is governed by the heart, and when we have fixed our choice nothing is more easy than to find a sort of arguments both from reason and the letter of scripture to justify it. The worldly spirit being got into the form, Satan found easy entrance into the worldly spirit, for there is his kingdom, and so antichrist, which began to work in the apostles days, now began to reign: thus all things went wrong apace; Sion, tho' inwardly free, became outwardly captive in mystic Babylon; the true Church mourned, the false church triumph'd; the woman cloathed with the sun, the spiritual woman, the Jerusalem which is from above, was forced to flee into the wilderness, whilst the whore mentioned in the Revelations held forth the cup of her fornication, wherewith

wherewith she made drunk the kings and inhabitants of the earth, and the beast gave to her his power, and she rode upon the beast, and ruled in the earth, and drank the blood of the saints, and prevailed. Who can sufficiently lament the darkness that covered the earth during the apostacy of her reign? nay, who can say it is finished? for tho' many a time the true seed laboured to free itself from the bondage under which it groaned, and to recover its spirit and life, sometimes in one kind of reformation, sometimes in another, yet the wrong nature has all along got the better of the right nature in the struggle, as to the generality of professors; for tho' they experienced some kindlings of life at the first, and went on well in the strength of it for a while, yet not continuing faithful to their leader, but mixing that which is of man with that which is of God, they by degrees lost the power, and so only retained the old principle in a new form: they then went to fighting about their new forms, and for a uniformity which was worth just nothing, for a unity of form without the unity of the spirit has no bound of true peace in it, nor bringeth any nearer to the love of God or man, as may appear

from that when all Christendom was agreed in the form of popery, there was perhaps as much of war, hatred and ill-will in the world as now; nor do such who hold even the best form of religion, without the power, enough consider, that the love they bear to those of their own particular church as such, arises from its distinction from others, and therefore such love springing from the multiplicity would be lost in a total uniformity; whereas they that are in the pure and living faith, and in that worship of the Father which is in spirit and in truth, they are in the true unity which varies not, for they have fellowship with the Father and with the Son thro' the spirit, and are members one of another, tho' their external modes and practices in religion be not in all things the very same. Such are the children of peace, and the salt of the earth in every nation under heaven.

And here O ye rulers and potentates, whether ye be call'd *Catholic*, *Most Christian*, or by whatever other assumed title: when God shall rise up to make inquisition for blood, how will you answer for that of your subjects which you have spilt, only because they could not bow down to your several opinions,

pinions, ceremonies and practices of human invention? Is this your way of making converts to Christ, by contradicting Christ's way and doctrine? Are racks, gibbets, and burning, the methods prescribed in the gospel of bringing in true worshippers to offer a free-will offering to the Lord in his temple, or are they not snares for the tender and fearful in heart, and the most effectual instruments to make them hypocrites like yourselves, who, whilst you are zealous for a form of Godliness, are void of the power thereof, void of that meekness, patience and charity, which are the power of God unto salvation; and if any man have not the spirit of Christ herein, he is none of his. Take heed what you do, for judgment in matters pertaining to conscience is the sole prerogative of Christ, and persecution on this account he alloweth not; nay, it will assuredly draw down wrath and vengeance on those powers and governments which exercise it. And can I here forbear a word of rebuke to you the clergy, of whatever church or nation, that poison the minds of princes with this damnable doctrine of persecution! shame upon you ye wolves in sheeps clothing, ye plague sores of the earth, ye ministers not

of Christ, but of Satan ! They were such as you who crucified the Lord of life, and such who under various pretences of religion have shed most of the righteous blood that has been spilt in Christendom since its foundation was first laid. May God defend all Christian princes from such evil counsellors, and praised be his name that this is not at present added to the number of our national sins !

Again.—The Lord hath a controversy with you O ye rulers in Christendom on righteousness. Hath he not set you over the nations to minister true judgment unto his people, and ordained you for a terror to evil doers and for the praise of them that do well ? How comes it to pass then that when he looketh for judgment, behold oppression, and for righteousness behold a cry ; for is not the cry of the injured entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and has he not just cause to complain with the preacher, —“ I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there, and the place of righteousness that iniquity was there” ? And how is it that the great and wealthy delinquent escapes with impunity whilst the little one only suffers ? To what purpose

purpose is all the formality and pomp of justice but to amuse, if, as in religion so in law, the form hath eaten up the power; if such dilatory and expensive proceedings are tolerated as are abundantly sufficient to weary out the patience and break the heart of the poor client: if law in matters of justice be not the same with equity, and if where truth only should take place, it be allow'd to set forth deceit and lies, according to that maxim of unrighteousness.—*We may declare what we will, and prove what we can.* Is not the law, by the corrupt practices of many that manage it, become the rod of oppression in the hand of the rich for the back of the poor, and when the former threatens revenge and ruin to the latter, can he do it more effectually than by suing him at the law, be his cause what it will? nay, are not such like menaces, even without any explanation, commonly understood of such prosecutions, as if law and ruin for a poor man were synonymous terms? Does the artless honest man know the ground he stands on when he has to do with the infinite frauds and tricks of the insidious petty-fogger? O simplicity, how hard is thy lot where subtlety bears rule! And can we any longer

longer question whether it be good policy as well as christian practice, after the letter, to give up the cloak also rather than to contend for the coat? But I must check a zeal for justice, which is perhaps whetted to a sharper edge than common by knowing many poor lambs that have been devour'd by wolves and foxes.

Are these things so, O ye rulers of Christendom, in your several dominions? Is judgment turned away backward, and does justice stand afar off! Is truth fallen in the street, and cannot equity enter? O tell it not among the heathen, lest the hands of the enemy be strengthened, lest they blaspheme the sacred name by which we are called. Look well to it, for your power and authority are from God! And to this end hath he exalted you above your brethren, that, as his vicegerents you should execute true judgment and righteousness on the earth.

Again.—The Lord hath a controversy with you O ye mighty ones on ambition. He hath placed you in power, and put the scepter of authority into your hands, to preserve peace and good government in the world, and not to be as roaring lions and ranging bears, to terrify and annoy one another.

ther. Hath not God, in the distributions of his providence, set bounds to your dominions? How is it then that you set none to your ambition? Hath not violence filled the earth by your means, whilst you meditate conquests from the rising to the setting of the sun, and call in nations whose language you know not, nay such as serve not the Lord of all Lords, to help with you in the bloody work. Say, if there be any one corner in the earth, any uninhabited island in its globe free from your usurping claims where meek and simple hearted christians may find a refuge from your vexations and wars: if there be, come ye children of peace, and let us go thither; for better, far better is it to live in love, as Christians should, tho' on roots and water, than to feed on better fare with strife and enmity, to groan under the harrow of oppression, and to bow for bread at the gates of the proud and ungodly. How long you potentates, will ye continue to lay heavy burdens on your people, and to add poverty to war? How long will ye give cause to Turks and Indians to say, fie upon these Christians, how do they delight in blood! Say, is a punctilio of honour, some rivalship in false glory, worth

worth the peace and treasure of kingdoms, and the lives of many thousands of your subjects? Do you know the end and issue of war, or do you understand how the course of nature is set on fire by the wrath and fury of enrag'd men, even so as to produce the most dreadful effects in nature? This latter question is given to you philosophers for explanation, and the knowledge of electricity may help towards it: beware then ye wordly powers who have so great an influence on the passions of mankind, how you kindle a fire which you may not be able to quench! O change your senseless and unchristian maxims of honour and glory for such principles as will make you truly glorious and your people happy! And is it not a time to consider and be wise when the mighty God hath appeared to visit for our transgressions? and as he hath begun, do we know where he will make an end? Hath he not clothed himself with terrible majesty, and have we not lately beheld most awful and wonderful signs of his displeasure in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth? O cast down your crowns and lofty titles at his feet, for both you and your kingdoms
are

are but as a drop of a bucket; and as the small dust of the ballance before him.—But whilst he thus arms himself with the creation, and makes the four elements the ministers of his wrath, are you not arming yourselves, nation against nation, to shed christian blood? Cannot the Lord do execution enough without you, or hath he called upon you to help him to pluck up, and to pull down; and to destroy? Doth he cause the earth to tremble and shake under us, and cannot he make us to fear and tremble! Do we know where the earth will open next, and are we content to go down alive, into the pit with hatred and vengeance in our hearts! Why, Sirs! be exhorted in the name of God to be at peace whilst his judgments are in the earth, lest he be provok'd to give the destroying angel full power over us! And what is all this contention for? Is it for a little more earth in some distant part of the world, which perhaps you can neither people nor cultivate, and perhaps at first ravag'd from poor Indians.—
 Why, have you not land enough already! Or is it for more trade? What a coil and bustle is kept up among you for more trade, as if life and salvation depended on it! Is

not the sea wide enough, and the land large enough for you all, but you must go on fighting to engross the whole trade of it to yourselves? God gave to Israel his people a small tract of country for their portion, small indeed if compar'd to what you already possess, but a new discover'd world added to the old cannot afford room enough for Christians. But O how little with godliness and contentment is sufficient for a people that fear the Lord!

And here a word to you, O Portugal, from the bowels of compassion! May the God of mercy comfort you in your present desolations and distress, and repair your breaches! But may you learn wisdom from your chastisement, and not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver, or stone graven by art, or man's device; but that as God is a spirit, so he will be worshipped in spirit and in truth. Hast thou not made Gold thy hope, and said to the fine gold, thou art my confidence? And tho' other nations may have sinned herein, after the likeness of thy transgression, yet where the cursed thing is found in more tents than one, is not the Almighty justified, let him begin to punish where to him seemeth good?

Think,

Think, O Spain, O Portugal, of the millions of poor Indians that your forefathers butcher'd for the sake of this gold! O is it not the price of blood that you bring into your treasury? And may not this visitation be in answer to the cry that is gone up against you on this account? Go not about to justify that execrable massacre by pretences of religion, which would be a disgrace to the worst religion.—It was their thirst of gold, and not their zeal for God, that made them murderers; for the God of mercy is not glorified by cruelty, nor is inhumanity the way to make converts to the gospel of peace and love. Blessed Jesus, how is thy sacred name abused when made to serve with our sins! Lastly, be admonished, O Portugal, should God vouchsafe to build again thy waste places, to put away blood-guiltiness from thee, even the shame of thy inquisition, that reproach of thy country, that reproach of any country: How else wilt thou be able to answer in the judgment for thy unmercifulness before that God who is merciful and patient, tho' he be provoked every day? What hast thou to do with another man's conscience? How knowest thou but he is justified rather than thee?

thice? Or if he be a cast-away, wherefore dost thou torment him before the time?

The Lord also hath a controversy with you *Achitophels* of the Christian world, and the disgrace of it; for the blood that is spilt, and the mischiefs that are done in the earth, are caused chiefly by your advice and at your instigation. How many of you to enrich yourselves and families, to keep yourselves in power, or to indulge a shameful prodigality at the expence of the people, abuse the ear and confidence of your royal masters, instil into them groundless jealousies of their subjects, and by the help of such misrepresentations make them to believe, that the support of your creatures is the security of their thrones? Is it not hence that men most easily practised on, and consequently the worst, are so often advanced to places of the highest trust in every class of promotions? Hence that corruption hath been carried into a Science, and all things become venal; and hence that the virtue, the courage and the liberties of people have been lost. Was not this the case of *Sparta*, of *Carthage*, and of ancient *Rome*? It was: and whatever people fall off from their civil and moral virtues, as they did, must expect to

to share in their fate. And here, O ye politicians, how gross is your error in separating honesty from policy! Would not justice and truth better answer the purposes of government? They would: for what have you gained by your subtle arts and serpentine wisdom, but to teach one another the way to deceive, and so to destroy all mutual good confidence? Hence it is that negotiations are protracted without satisfaction and without end—Hence that treaties are violated without conscience, without scruple, and that distinctions, evasions and equivocations have stolen away all meaning from language, and all security from compacts. Thus vice defeats the very end it drives at, and deservedly becomes the parent of its own disappointment and shame. And have you better consulted the true interest of your respective countries, by encouraging an unlimited extent of commerce, and sacrificing blood and treasure without end to this your great *Diana*? Whereas an unbounded foreign trade, whether promoted by peace or conquest, has ever been the undoing of nations, as the natural consequence of this is luxury, which begets avarice, fraud and oppression to support it.—Hence follow,

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both by example and temptation, a general depravation of morals and decay of religion, which all conspire to the destruction of any state; and tho' temporary expedients be found out to prop it up for a while, its downfall is inevitable. So false are those maxims which measure the welfare of a nation by the abundance of its riches; and for this I appeal to Universal History *. May you be wise now O ye kings! May you be learned ye that are judges of the earth! Learned to know, that to serve the Lord with fear is your truest wisdom, and to put away the wicked from before you, the surest way for your thrones to be establish'd in righteousness.

Next, how will you answer for yourselves, ye nobles and wealthy ones of the earth, when the Lord shall enter into judgment with you, for that when he hath enlarg'd your coasts, and given you more than a double portion of this world's goods, you have shew'd a greater insensibility of the benefits you have received than even the ox and the ass, and squandered away upon your lusts what was intrusted to you as stewards for the relief of the indigent. How do the wants of the poor cry against you,

whose

* See Rollin on profane history.

whose sweat you have wrung from their faces, and their marrow from their bones, in your service; and tho' they eat the bread and drink the water of affliction without any thing for their comfort, ye say it is enough; nay, do not many of you build better houses for your dogs than for them! How are the four quarters of the world ransacked for the supplies of your luxury and pride! How is invention rack'd to diversify your pleasures and entertainments? Is there any end to your expence! Is there any beginning to your seriousness? Nay, is seriousness allowed in your houses? Is God in all your thoughts? But if some of you set no bounds to your prodigality, how insatiable is the avarice of many others, who, in the midst of immoderate wealth, turn vile usurers for more, or go on joining house to house, and land to land, till there be no place for others, grinding the face of the poor, oppressing the hireling in his wages, and their tenants in their rents, and shutting up the bowels of their compassion even from their needy relations, that they may sacrifice all to the golden calf which they have set up in their hearts. What shall be said of you, ye self-infatuated misers, ye

filthy idolaters ! A holy indignation must rise in every Christian heart against you as enemies to God and man. You are a useless burden on the earth that bears you ; your life is a curse and your death is a benefit to society ; even charity itself cannot hope any good concerning you, nor dare we at our peril speak well of the covetous whom God abhorreth. If it be possible for a covetous person to convert, put away the cursed thing from you and repent, that we may have hope of your salvation.

And hath not the Lord a complaint against you, O ye daughters of Israel ! Yea, he standeth up to plead with you also. Hath he not cloathed you with beauty, and made you the loveliest part of his workmanship, that you might be his pleasant plants, and bring forth fruit to his praise ? How is it then that you have turned his goodness into the occasion of your sin, and by an idolatrous kind of self-love lifted up your hearts in pride because of your beauty ? Was vanity of dress displeasing to God in the Jewish women of old,* and is it less so in christian women ? Nay, do you not far exceed them in costliness and changeableness of apparel, perpetually varying fashions till there

* See Isaiah iii.

there be no longer any standard of dress, or continuance in fashion; decking yourselves with gold and jewels, and painting yourselves in various colours, that the men may bow down and worship you, and thus spreading snares both for yourselves and them: But know of a truth, that your most comely ornament and best recommendation both with God and man is a meek and quiet spirit, and a heart principled with humility and grace: these will render you what you were design'd to be, the glory and comfort of your husbands, and their best of earthly blessings; whereas instead of this, what shame and sorrow do many of you bring upon them by your evil tongues and evil tempers! How is the marriage state evil spoken of because of such, and with too much cause dreaded by many, whilst they behold those houses, which should be mansions of peace and love, fill'd with perpetual strife and contradiction! Wherefore need I mention your boundless love of play and pleasure, your vain assemblies, and the scandalous encouragement given by both sexes to theatres and masquerades, those schools of naughtiness, which have corrupted the minds and morals of so many thousands in Christendom?

Is this to live as becometh the daughters of *Abraham*, or is not she that liveth in pleasure dead whilst she liveth, dead to grace and dead to God ! Be wise now O ye careless ones, and harden not your hearts in this your day of visitation, but forsake the vain ways and customs of a sinful world, and turn to the Lord with all your hearts. Many daughters of Israel have chosen this good part, and are now on the way that leadeth to Sion.—Give in your names to Christ, as they have done, and follow their bright examples to glory ; so shall ye become a praise in the earth and afford a subject for a song of praise to the angels in heaven. Such a change in you will not fail to have a good effect on the men, at least, if it does not convert, it will condemn, and leave them without excuse, so that they shall not be able to charge the guilt of their sin upon you a second time.

And now am I constrained in love and duty to add a word in particular to thee O *England* my beloved country, and to thee O *London* my native place.—May the God of Jacob be your defence, and shower down the richest blessings of his grace, and of his providence upon you ! Thou hast been a
nation

nation highly favour'd of God, preserv'd and delivered by distinguishing mercies, and enlighten'd with the knowledge of his truth above many other nations. O who can recount all the Lord's visitations of love towards thee? So great is the sum of them! But hast thou given in return correspondent proofs of thy love towards him? are thy tokens such whereby we may know that thy people is the Lord's people? Alas! how shall I, who am a sinful member of a sinful land, uncover thy nakedness and lay open thy shame? And yet this is not a time to cover but to confess our sin; and therefore bear with me in a few questions. What are thy civil virtues? And what are thy moral virtues? And is thy Christianity according to the standard of the sanctuary? Are thy great men such as prefer the publick good to their private interest, and act as becometh faithful guardians to the people, walking uprightly and speaking righteously, despising the gain of oppressions, and shaking their hands from holding of bribes? Or do many of them fall short of virtuous heathens in these things? Are those that make the laws subject to the laws? Or does the number and figure of the offenders set them

above their reach! Are thy magistrates and governors men fearing God, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour by a life and conversation becoming the gospel of *Christ*? Or does not the religion of our country, as to many of them, suffer thro' their ill examples? Let thus far be answer'd with mourning and lamentation!

But how stands morality with us? Does not luxury abound in the superlative degree, and is not the encouragement of trade pretended for a cover to our pride? but say, will you plead for such a degree or kind of it as needs vice for its support? O the deceivableness of unrighteousness! How craftily do we impose upon ourselves by gilding over a bad principle with a good name! Has not the love of pleasure banish'd the love of God from our hearts, and family religion from our houses! Let practice testify. Are not the vain fashions of France, even with French names to them, spread thro' the land, and our country dames turn'd into Madams? O how little of rural plainness and simplicity is now to be found in the country, either in dress or manners! How shall I be found faithful or deliver my own soul, if I pass over in silence the grosser immoralities
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and more crying sins that abound in the streets of our great metropolis, as rude abuse, unmercifulness to the poor beasts, drunkenness, sensuality, prostitution and the shocking profanations of God's holy name by vain oaths and horrid imprecations; and O thou scarlet sin of perjury, how doth our land mourn because of thee! Let the vice which ought not to be named among Christians be here lamented in silence! And if thus great be the danger of infection from the open, many also are our perils from the whited sepulchre, for various are the baits of deceit in every way of dealing. What traps at court, what traps in trade, what traps in law, nay what traps in religion also, to make profelytes to this or that church, and in many a one's pretending to a faith which he hath not, to catch preferment! And so artfully does the fowler spread his nets both on the hill and in the plain, that the honest simple heart finds it hard indeed to escape. O England, are these the fruits of thy mercies, the fruits of thy deliverances, and the fruits of all thy blessings? Look well to it, for the Lord is risen to shake terribly the earth, and who knoweth how near the time of thy shaking may be! O repent and
turn

turn unto the Lord, and put away the evil of thy doings, that thine iniquities may not be thy ruin!

Take in good part what is here offer'd to you, my dear countrymen and brethren. God knoweth how unwillingly I have taken up this office, and how I have been humbled since I enter'd upon it, and am at this moment, under a deep sense of my unworthiness, and the remembrance of my many and great offences; but the spirit of reproof and exhortation is upon me, and I cannot, I dare not resist it, and therefore, as one who hath in a measure obtained mercy and grace, I exhort you with earnestness, and I exhort you with authority, to flee from the wrath to come, by fleeing to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Lastly, To you that are gospel professors, whether in the establishment or toleration, let a word be spoken in love. Infidelity is confessedly one of the crying sins of this nation, and much of the ungodliness we complain of is the fruit of this tree: but are all believers Christians in deed and in truth? Are all that apply the promises to themselves by the help of a lusty confidence entitled to them? Are all that talk and di-

distinguish about justification, justified? Are
 all that boast of the covenant and the elec-
 tion, children of Abraham's faith? Are all
 that hold perfection perfect? Who will
 dare to reproach Christianity with such an
 affirmation? Know of a truth, that what-
 ever you believe scientifically only, is not
 believing to the saving of the soul, for the
 true faith purifies the heart.—Know there-
 fore, that if you have bitter envying and
 strife in your hearts, you ought not to glory
 and lye against the truth.—Know that if
 you live in covetousness, and worldly mind-
 edness and after the flesh, you shall die,
 believe what you will.—Trust not then in
 lying words, saying, the temple of the Lord!
 the temple of the Lord are we! for if ye
 are not the temple of the living God by the
 indwelling of his spirit, ye are synagogues
 of Satan: and if ye are without holiness, ye
 shall not see the Lord, nor indeed possibly
 can. Strive not one with another in zeal
 for particular forms, or in zeal against them,
 for an over-eagerness about these things ar-
 gues a mind too little engag'd in the weigh-
 tier matters of religion. I call you not all to a
 unity of practice in these things; come into
 it as you can, and in the mean time bear
 with

with one another, giving diligent heed that you keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Once more.—Let the lowest among our Lord's servants exhort you in much Christian affection, not to perplex yourselves and others with doubtful disputations, but seek to be possess'd of the substance of faith, as a living principle or root of the divine life in your souls, rather than of notions in the head concerning it. Frame not first to yourselves opinions, and then search the scriptures to support your own conceits by their authority; for this is to set up idols in your hearts, and to tempt God to answer you according to your idols, and so making the scriptures to be a snare unto you. It is the spirit of God, and not our own invented meanings, or critical learning put into the letter, that makes it the word of life to us, —Thus the same scriptures may be to one but as the word of man, and to another the word of God. Lastly, cease from your own wisdom, will and ways in things pertaining to God's spiritual Kingdom, that as his is the power, so may his be the glory; for a faith from him working by love, and his spirit of love working true obedience in
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our hearts, is alone that threefold cord of the Christian which cannot be broken.

I here conclude this well meant admonition with my earnest prayer to Almighty God, that from the serious consideration of his judgments now in the earth we may all learn righteousness: that the Lord of all Lords will bless our gracious Sovereign, and all the royal family, and grant him a long and happy reign over us; that he will direct his counsels, and teach his senators wisdom, more especially at this time of public danger and distress, that so all their consultations may be for the glory of God and the welfare of these nations. May the spirit of grace and truth rest upon our bishops and pastors; and may all the people fear God, honour and obey the king, and live in Christian charity one with another; and let the reader say, Amen!

F I N I S.

our hearts, is alone that threefold cord of
the Christian which cannot be broken.

I here conclude my *Publick* address.

With my earnest prayer to Almighty

By R. M. AND Y. in the Old Bailey, and

the J. W. and B. W. in the

the Fleetstreet, that the

Lords will bless our gracious Sovereign, and

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and happy reign over us, that he will direct

his Councils, and teach his Ministers wisdom,

more especially at this time of public dan-

ger and distress, that to all their contri-

butions may be the glory of God, and the

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

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pastors; and may all the people fear God,

A Prefatory Discourse on Mistakes concern-

ing RELIGION, ENTHUSIASM, EXPERI-

ENCES, &c.

By THOMAS HARTLEY, M. A.

Rector of Winwick in Northamptonshire.

